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# THE Labour Gazette

THE JOURNAL OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.]

JANUARY 1894.

[No. 1.—VOL. II.]

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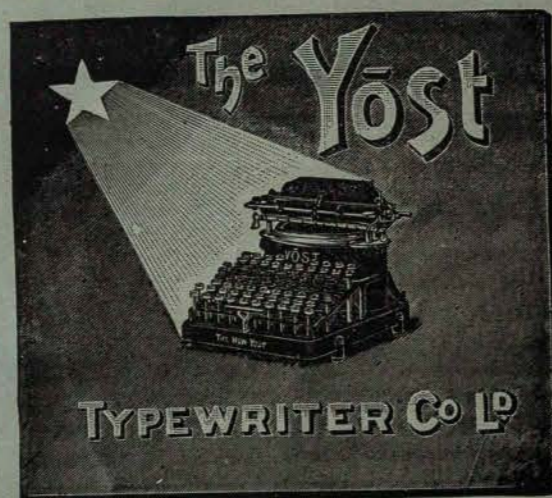
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JANUARY 1894.

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LABOUR DEPARTMENT,

BOARD OF TRADE,

43, PARLIAMENT STREET, S.W.,

15th January 1894.

## STATE OF EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER.

I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

In comparing the statistics of employment at the end of December with those for the previous month, it must be borne in mind that from various seasonal causes employment is usually somewhat slack at the close of the year, and moreover, that the Christmas holidays, which have a tendency to disturb trade for a time, have this year in many cases been extended beyond the usual period. It is probable, therefore, that the returns from trade societies for December afford a less accurate index than usual of changes in the labour market.

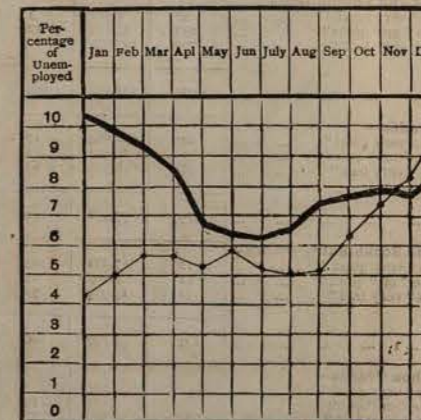
Though (probably for the reasons assigned) the proportion of unemployed in the trade societies making returns has risen to some extent, it is considerably lower than in the corresponding period of last year, when, partly owing to the stoppage in the Cotton Trade, the percentage was higher than at any period since the returns were first made in 1886.

Of the 32 trade societies with an aggregate membership of 336,337 making returns, 26,452, or 7.9 per cent., are reported as in receipt of unemployed benefit at the close of December, compared with 7.3 per cent. for November. For the 26 societies, however, which have made returns since May, the percentage of unemployed is 8.4, compared with 7.8 per cent. for November, and with 10.2 per cent. for the 23 societies from which returns were received in December 1892.

As in previous numbers, a chart is inserted, which enables the percentages of unemployed shown in the monthly returns to be compared with those for last year.

Chart showing the percentage of unemployed members of the trade unions making returns at the close of each month of 1892 and 1893. Unions which began to make returns since May 1893 are not included in this chart.

The thick line applies to 1893, the thin line to 1892.



Some slight improvement appears to have taken place in the Shipbuilding Industry during the month, due to some extent to the necessity for repairs arising out of the recent stormy weather.

The Steel and Iron Trades continue depressed, though scarcely so much so as last month, the termina-

The December number completed the first volume of the GAZETTE. Though the publication of the GAZETTE only began in May 1893, it has been thought desirable that the first volume should only consist of eight numbers, in order that each subsequent volume may correspond with the calendar year.

An index to the first volume is now in the printers' hands, and will be distributed with the February number of the GAZETTE.

An account is given on another page of the changes now being introduced by the War Office in the hours of labour at the Ordnance Factories, whereby over 14,000 employees will in future have their hours reduced to 48 per week.

A new feature in the present number is the account on page 12 of the past month's operations of some of the principal permanent Labour Bureaux.

The reports which appeared in the last two numbers of the GAZETTE with regard to the rates of wages at the recent Autumn Hirings of farm labourers are supplemented in the present number by a statement of the actual rates at which a certain number of labourers were hired in a selected district of Yorkshire. The particulars have been obtained by direct inquiry by the Department.

The Reports and recommendations of the Committees appointed by the Home Secretary to investigate the conditions of certain unhealthy trades, viz., potteries, chemical works and lucifer match works, are summarised on another page. The report on leadworkers was dealt with in the December number. A summary is also given of a recent notification, with regard to dangerous and unhealthy trades, issued by the Home Office.

The General Report of the Registrar-General on the census of 1891 has just been published. The Report is too important in its bearing on labour questions to be dealt with adequately in a single review. In the present number attention is confined to those parts of the Report which deal with overcrowding and single-room tenements.

The Department was represented at the Conference of the Board of Trade at Leicester on January 6th and 8th, at which several matters were subjected to arbitration. Notice of its proceedings is given on another page.

tion of the Scottish Coal Dispute having had a beneficial effect upon the trade of that country, while in certain other districts some revival is reported.

The Engineering Trade, notably on the Tyne, is still very depressed, the percentage of trade union members unemployed in this district amounting to 23.5. Taken as a whole, the percentage of unemployed in unions connected with this group of trades has risen from 12.2 to 12.4 during the month.

Reports from most districts describe the condition of the Building Trades as quiet, though fairly good for the time of year, the percentage of unemployed shown by the trade societies having risen from 3.7 to 5.8.

The Furnishing Trades have not maintained the improvement of last month, the percentage of unemployed returned having increased from 5.4 to 6.8.

The Printing and kindred trades continue depressed, the temporary improvement that took place during November having ceased, with the result that the percentage of unemployed members of unions has risen from 3.8 to 6.1.

The depression in the Ready-made Clothing Trade is still very marked, and the Bespoke Trade is also quiet, as is usual at this season of the year. Little or no change for the better has taken place in the wholesale Boot Trade, the slight improvement apparent in certain districts having been counter-balanced by a falling-off in others.

Little alteration is reported in the Cotton Trade, which still continues brisk, nearly every other branch of the Textile Trades remaining depressed.

With some exceptions (e.g., in the Bristol District) the Mining Industry is reported to be brisk, a complete resumption of work having practically taken place.

Employment for seamen has been scarce at most of the principal ports.

In some places, including the Thames and the Tyne, there has been a falling-off in the employment of dock and riverside labour during the month, but at Cardiff such work has been steady, and at Liverpool and Glasgow an improvement is reported.

Of the 32 societies making returns, six describe trade as "good," and 26 as "bad," though a more hopeful tone pervades many of these reports than has been the case for some months past. From the monthly reports published by many societies and from materials specially furnished, the following additional particulars of the state of employment in the industries named are collected:—

Table with columns: Description of Trade by Branches of Societies making Returns, December (Branches, Members), Per-centage of Members for Dec., Per-centage of Members for Nov.

The number of fresh disputes that have arisen during the month is smaller than in any previous month of the year, being 23 compared with 35 in November, and 24 in December, 1892. Of these, 7 occurred in the Textile Trades, 5 in the Mining Industry, 3 in the Metal Trades, 3 in connection with Dock Labour, 2 in the Building Trades, and the remaining 3 in other industries. None of these disputes have been of an important character, and the numbers affected have in no case been large; particulars obtained with respect to 16 disputes show that the number concerned only amounted to 2,171.

The changes in wages reported during December have been comparatively unimportant. The miners at non-associated collieries in West Scotland have lost the advance of 1s. per week which they temporarily obtained during the continuance of the strike of miners at associated collieries in West Scotland. Rates of Leicester operatives working on nursery boots and shoes have been increased about 7 1/2 per cent. for piecework, and at Leeds boot and shoe operatives by the abolition of shop-rent benefit to about 1s. per week.

The number of bankrupts gazetted during the month was 412 as compared with 387 in December 1892.

British emigrants from the United Kingdom for places out of Europe in December numbered 6,973, compared with 8,293 in December 1892.

The statistics of pauperism for December again show an increase in most of the selected industrial districts of the United Kingdom when compared with those for November. The total number relieved in the selected districts on one day in the second week of December was 339,038, or 232 per 10,000 of population, as compared with 334,065, or 228 per 10,000 in November. On the corresponding day in December 1892, the number was 310,019, or 212 per 10,000 of population.

The following table summarises the detailed table on p. 12, and will be found useful for comparative purposes.

Comparative Table showing the number of Paupers per 10,000 of Population in selected industrial districts on a given day in October, November and December in 1893 and 1892, respectively.

Table with columns: District, 1893 (October, November, December), 1892 (October, November, December), TOTAL (Selected Districts).

II.—LONDON.

(1) STATISTICS OF TRADE SOCIETIES.

Engineering, Shipbuilding and Metal Trades.—A further decline in the condition of these trades has taken place during the month, 58 branches of 7 unions, with an aggregate membership of 10,364, returning 1,008 (or 9.7 per cent.) unemployed, compared with 8.7 per cent. last month, and 8 per cent. for October. Of these branches, 2 with 328 members, describe trade as "good," 6 with 1,060 members as "moderate," and 50 with 8,976 members as "bad."

Building Trades.—Apart from seasonal causes, bricklayers and masons continue busy, while other branches show a steady decline, which is particularly noticeable in the case of the carpenters and joiners. In 122 branches of four societies, containing 8,327 members, 546 (or 6.6 per cent.) are returned as unemployed, compared with 4.6 per cent. last month, and 3.6 for October. In eight societies, 36 branches, with 2,725 members describe trade as "good," 46 branches with 2,937 members as "moderate," and 111 branches with 8,717 members as "bad."

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—These trades continue in the same depressed condition that has characterised them for several months. In 18 branches of five societies, containing 1,200 members, 245 (or 7.6 per cent.) are returned as unemployed, compared with 8.6 per cent. for October, and 11.1 per cent. for November.

Only one branch with 700 members describe trade as "good," while no less than 17 with 2,519 members describe it as "bad."

Printing and Bookbinding Trades.—Although this is usually one of the best months of the year for the London Printing Trade, the returns to hand show that in 10 societies with 17,121 members no less than 1,044 (or 6.1 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 4.7 per cent. last month, and 6 per cent. for October. A great strain is said to have been put upon the funds of the trade societies connected with these industries, a number of members having received all the out-of-work benefit to which they are entitled under the rules.

(2) DOCK EMPLOYMENT IN LONDON.

Taking the whole month through, the state of employment for dock labourers has been about the same as for November, the average number employed by the three Dock Companies\* being estimated at 7,144, compared with 7,151 in the previous month, and 7,376 in December 1892. Towards the end of the month, however, the numbers employed fell off very considerably, as is shown by the following figures:—

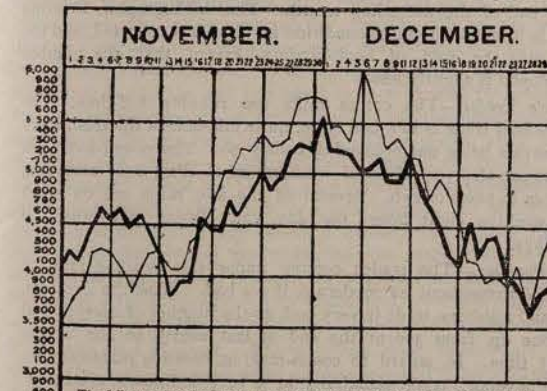
Estimated average number of Dock Labourers employed by the Dock Companies.

Table with columns: 1st week in December, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, Average for December, Ditto for November.

The fall of employment is usual at the end of the year, as is shown in the following Chart, which (as in last number) compares the daily number of dock labourers employed by the London and India Docks Joint Committee during the last two months of the years 1893 and 1892:—

Chart showing the total number of Dock Labourers employed by the Committee at the London, St. Katharine, East and West India, Victoria and Albert Docks, and the Town Warehouses, for each day during the months of November and December 1893. The corresponding diagram for the previous year is also given for comparison. Dock Labourers employed by Shipowners direct, Stevedores and Coal Porters are not included, nor does the Chart extend to the labourers employed at the Millwall and Surrey Docks and at the Wharves.

[The thick curve applies to 1893, and the thin curve to 1892.]



The following are the figures on which the Chart for December 1893, is based.

Table with columns: Day of Month, Number employed, Day of Month, Number employed, Day of Month, Number employed.

To go into further detail, it is reported that work in the up-town tea warehouses and at the fruit wharves was very brisk during a considerable part of the month, owing to the Christmas season, though it fell off towards the close of the month. Along the waterside and at the

\* Viz., London and India Docks Joint Committee (excluding Tilbury), Millwall and Surrey Commercial. The figures include labourers employed through contractors.

wharves generally employment has not been so good, numbers of men being idle. On the whole, employment has been fair at the East and West India and Millwall Docks. A dispute on a wages question began at a wharf at Limehouse in the middle of the month. The men's places have been taken by "free labourers."

(3) EMPLOYMENT AND DISTRESS IN LONDON.

So far as can be judged from the information supplied, there has been little change during the month in the amount of distress in various London districts owing to want of employment. The Tailoring and Slipper Trades in East London have been very depressed, painters' and builders' labourers have suffered from the usual seasonal slackness, and there has been distress among casual and waterside labourers. It is to be remembered that want of work usually causes greater distress towards the close of a period of depression than at the beginning, owing to the exhaustion of resources.

It is reported that 17 London local authorities are maintaining labour registries, mostly of a temporary character, for the enrolment of names of unemployed persons in their districts, and that six of these authorities are also assisting some of the unemployed by the provision of work. At the permanent Labour Bureaux at Chelsea, St. Pancras and Battersea, 744 new applicants for work were registered during the month, of whom 254 were placed in situations. Further details are given on p. 12.

The Mansion House Committee on the Unemployed (the appointment of which on October 31st was mentioned in the November GAZETTE) presented its report to the Conference on December 28th. Generally speaking, the report is adverse to the institution of unremunerative and artificially-created relief works, while recommending that public and private employers "should endeavour so to apportion to the season the work that they may be able to give out as to meet times of special distress, which may generally be foreseen." "Such work, however, should, as a rule, be placed on the open market." The Committee consider that the improvident, idle and vicious can be adequately dealt with by the Poor Law, and that the more provident should be dealt with privately and thoroughly by a strengthening of existing relief agencies.

(4) PAUPERISM IN LONDON.

The pauperism returns for London districts again show an increase in the number relieved on a given day when compared with November, the number being 106,376 or 253 per 10,000 of population in the middle of December, and 102,453 or 243 per 10,000 in November. The increases have been greatest in the Southern and Central districts. The figures for December are in excess of those for December 1892 by 8,926 (or 22 per 10,000). The increase in particular districts ranges from 17 per 10,000 in the West to 23 in the South. If we take the indoor and outdoor paupers separately for each London district and for West Ham, the rates per 10,000 of population for December and November 1893, are as follows:—

Table with columns: In-door (Dec, Nov), Out-door (Dec, Nov), Total (Dec, Nov).

III.—PROVINCIAL REPORTS FROM LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS AND OTHERS.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

Tyne and Wear District.

Coal Mining—Durham.—The Durham Coal Trade is in a normally good condition. The pits are working regularly on full time. Of the pitmen slightly over 2 per cent. are unemployed. The coalowners' provisional offer of 5 per cent. advance for six fortnightly pays has been extended indefinitely, and was agreed to by the workmen's representatives on December 30th.